

**Michigan Commission of Agriculture  
and Rural Development**



House Agriculture Committee

November 9, 2011

## MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE and RURAL DEVELOPMENT



**Chair, Donald Coe, Traverse City, Michigan**

Donald Coe was appointed to the Commission in February 2006 by Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Mr. Coe graduated from Cornell University and has extensive experience in international trade issues for wines and spirits. He is active in local economic development boards and industry and agricultural groups. He is the managing partner of Black Star Farms, an agricultural destination that includes a winery, distillery, bed and breakfast, creamery (Leelanau Cheese Company), orchards and vineyards, and horse stables. Black Star Farms is the 100th certified

Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) farm in Michigan and has won numerous awards and recognition for their products.

He resides in Traverse City, Michigan with his wife Marylou. His term expires December 31, 2013

**Contact information:**

211 Midtown Drive

Traverse City, MI 49684

231-995-0672 (Home)

231-944-1294 (Farm)

231-944-1299 (Fax)

e-mail: [dcoe@blackstarfarms.com](mailto:dcoe@blackstarfarms.com)



**Vice Chair, Velmar Green, Elsie, Michigan**

Velmar Green was appointed to the commission on July 20, 2009, by Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Mr. Green is the President of Green Meadow Farms, Inc., a family farm near Elsie. Green Meadow Farms is known worldwide for its breeding of Holstein dairy cattle. The farm was one of the first to be environmentally verified by the Michigan Department of Agriculture under the Michigan Agriculture

Environmental Assurance Program. Green Meadow has recently constructed an anaerobic digester to generate electricity. The farm is also the home of Michigan State University Training Center for Dairy Professionals. To learn more go to [greenmeadowfarms.com](http://greenmeadowfarms.com). Green previously served as director and treasurer of the Michigan Milk Producers Association.

Green and his wife Margaret have a son Craig and a daughter Margery who both are active in the farming operation. His term expires December 31, 2012.

**Contact information:**

8839 Mead Road

Elsie, MI 48831  
989-862-4291 (Office)  
989-862-4292 (Fax)  
989-862-5020 (Home)  
e-mail: [VGGMF@aol.com](mailto:VGGMF@aol.com)



**Secretary, Jennifer Fike, Ann Arbor, Michigan**

Jennifer Fike was appointed to the Commission in February 2010, by Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Fike is Executive Director of the Food System Economic Partnership (FSEP). FSEP is a nonprofit serving five counties in Southeast Michigan whose mission is to catalyze change in the regional food system. Through collaborative efforts, FSEP strives to localize the food system to create agricultural economic development opportunities for food and farming businesses and works with farmers who are interested in growing food for local markets along with

institutional food buyers who wish to source local food. Fike graduated from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor's of Business Administration and has over 20 years in business management experience. A long-time supporter of local agriculture, Fike is a CSA (community supported agriculture) member, shops at area farmers' markets and buys Michigan-made products. She is a member of the Michigan Food Policy Council Task Force, Legacy Land Conservancy Board of Trustees, and has previously served as Treasurer of Washtenaw Literacy and the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy.

Fike lives in Ann Arbor with her husband, Jon Cioffi, and as an avid runner and marathoner, she enjoys running the rural roads in the surrounding area. Her term expires December 31, 2011.

**Contact Information:**

1627 Harbal Drive  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105  
734-222-6859 (Office)  
734-994-4139 (Home)  
e-mail: [fikej@fsepmichigan.org](mailto:fikej@fsepmichigan.org)



**Member, Diane Hanson, Cornell, Michigan**

Diane Hanson was appointed to the commission on January 11, 2011, by Governor Rick Snyder.

Hanson is a third generation owner and operator of Hanson Seed Farm with her husband Dennis and two sons, Scott and Ted. They raise over 250 acres of seed potatoes, along with small grains, hay, and beef cattle. The farm is known state and nation- wide for seed production.

She is active in local, state, and national agricultural groups. She was appointed to the U.S. Potato Board in 2010, serves on the FSA committee and the Hiawathaland Farm Bureau as a director and past president, is a member of the Upper Peninsula Potato Growers, the Michigan Potato Industry, and the Potato Growers of Michigan. She coordinates the setup of commodities, farm history and present day farming practices at the Miracle of Life display, which runs during the Upper Peninsula State Fair. She also organizes a farm tour for local, state, and federally elected officials to help educate them on farming in the UP.

She resides in Cornell, Michigan, with her husband Dennis, they have 6 children and 13 grandchildren. She enjoys gardening, along with taking care of her grandchildren, helping others, and appreciating the good life that she has. Her term expires 12/31/2014.

**Contact Information:**

3595 26th Road

Cornell, MI 4818

906-384-6301 (Office Line 1)

906-384-6908 (Office Line 2)

906-384-6908 (Home)

e-mail: hansfarm@up.net



**Member, Bob Kennedy, St. Charles, Michigan**

Bob Kennedy was appointed to the commission on January 11, 2011, by Governor Rick Snyder.

Kennedy is Vice President of Operations for Auburn Bean and Grain, which is a family owned company that services farmers in Saginaw, Bay, Midland, Gratiot, Shiawassee, Clinton, and surrounding counties handling all grain commodities and agronomy services, as well as products needed for crop production. With annual sales of \$170 million, Auburn Bean and Grain employs 70 people full-time and has five locations.

Kennedy is a past board member and Chair of the Michigan Agri-business Association and has been employed in agri-business for the last 24 years.

Kennedy owns and lives on a small farm in Saginaw County with his wife and two children, and is an active hunter and fisherman. His term expires December 31, 2014.

**Contact Information:**

7710 S. Chapin Road

St. Charles, Michigan 48655

989-643-5597 (Home)

989-662-4423 (Office)

989-662-2425 (Office Fax)

e-mail: bkennedy@abgco.net

# **MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development has the responsibility to recommend and in some cases determine policy on food and agricultural issues.

As gubernatorial appointees, the Commissioners are representatives of the Executive branch of government, and cooperate and collaborate with the Governor in the development, creation, implementation, and communication of policy. Effective and efficient administration requires a significant degree of interaction, especially in the implementation of Executive Orders and Executive Directives issued by the Governor that apply to the Commission and to the Department.

Michigan's multi-billion dollar food and agriculture industry needs ongoing focus and support for it to continue to grow. To this end, the Commission encourages a partnership of government, private industry, and citizens working toward common goals of protecting the public health, growing our economy, and preserving our environmental heritage.

The Commissioners strive to generate statewide citizen interest and mobilize support for issues important to the food and agriculture sector and to promote the future health and growth of Michigan's second largest industry.

## **LEGAL AUTHORITY**

The Michigan Commission of Agriculture was created under Act 13 of 1921; and reorganized under Act 380 of 1965, as amended; and named in other statutes that provide specific duties and responsibilities. Executive Orders 2009-45, 2009-54, and 2011-2 further explain the role, powers, and duties of the Commission. Executive Order 2011-2 also renamed the Commission into the Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development shall consist of five members, not more than three of whom shall be members of the same political party, appointed by the Governor and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The term of the office of each member shall be four years. A member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring other than by expiration of a term shall be appointed for the unexpired term. The Commission shall elect from its members such officers as it deems advisable, and not later than March 31 of each year the Commission shall designate a Chairperson to serve in that role through March 31 of the following year. A member may not serve as Chairperson for consecutive annual periods. Commissioners "shall be knowledgeable about modern agriculture or food supply and committed to the protection, promotion, and preservation of the food, agricultural, conservation, and economic interests of the People of the State of Michigan."

The business of the Commission shall be in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Act 267 of 1976; and records of the Commission are subject to the Freedom of Information Act, Act 442 of 1976.

The chief executive officer of the department is the director of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The Director is appointed by the Governor and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Director shall consult with the Commission on agricultural policy matters and the Commission may provide advice to the Director on matters relating to the Department, including, but not limited to, agricultural policy.

The Commission has specific responsibilities as delegated within various pieces of legislation:

- a) Michigan Renaissance Zone Act, 1996 PA 376: responsibility to act on Agriculture Processing and Renewable Energy Renaissance Zones.
- b) Julian-Stille Value-Added Act, 2000 PA 322: responsibility to act on Value Added Grants and the Agriculture Development Fund.
- c) Insect and Plant Disease Act, 1931 PA 189: responsibility to act on Nursery Inspection Fees.
- d) Michigan Right to Farm Act, 1981 PA 93: responsibility to define and review annually the Generally Accepted Agriculture and Management Practices; and, make recommendation to the Director when a review of a Livestock Siting Suitability Determination is requested.
- e) Michigan Seed Law, 1965 PA 329: responsibility for prohibition of local ordinances unless reviewed by Commission.
- f) Anhydrous Ammonia Security Act, 2006 PA 417: responsibility to establish Safety and Security Practices.
- g) Michigan Organic Products Act, 2000 PA 316: responsibility to determine Registration Fees.
- h) Animal Industry Act, 1988 PA 466: responsibility for determination of Livestock Zoning and Movement Restrictions.
- i) Pseudorabies and Swine Brucellosis Control and Eradication Act, 1992 PA 239: responsibility to establish fee for testing of animals.
- j) Seal of Quality Act, 1961 PA 70: ability to determine standards for the "seal of quality," establish fees, and enforcement actions.
- k) Michigan Agricultural Processing Act, 1998 PA 381: responsibility to define Generally Accepted Practices for Processors.
- l) Food Law of 2000, 2000 PA 92: responsibility to consult on fees if the Local Health Department ceases their inspection.
- m) State Potato Industry Commission, 1970 PA 29: responsibility to provide permission for Potato Commission to re-apportion districts.
- n) State Bean Commission, 1965 PA 114: responsibility to provide permission for Bean Commission to re-apportion districts.
- o) Agricultural Commodities Marketing Act, 1965 PA 232: responsibility to provide permission for re-apportionment of 232 Check-Off Programs.
- p) Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451: responsibility to determine agriculture purpose within surface water discharge provisions; approval of conservation easement practices; approval of pesticide container recycling program; provision for reviewing local pesticide ordinances; approval of Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program conservation practices; provision for reviewing local fertilizer ordinances; development and

approval of voluntary groundwater stewardship practices; approval of members to Conservation Species Advisory Panel; identify jointly with Michigan Department of Environmental Quality 2,500 acres for cranberry production; definition of agriculture purpose for water diversions; water conservation measures and within the Generally Accepted Agriculture and Management Practices; approval of scoring for purchase of Development Rights; spending of Ag Preservation funds; agriculture practices/Generally Accepted Agriculture and Management Practices within hunting / conservation practices; and orders on restricted species/invasives.

q) Horse Racing Law of 1995, 1995 PA 279: promulgation of rules for premiums at fairs.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development should assist the Governor in protecting Michigan's health, economy, and environment through policies that:

- Enhance food safety;
- Prevent and mitigate diseases and pests of humans, plants, and animals;
- Promote land and water stewardship;
- Develop land-use policies that allow for long-term agricultural viability;
- Develop, diversify, and expand agriculture's economic potential;
- Protect consumers and ensure fairness in the marketplace;
- Recognize and celebrate the heritage of agriculture, including the events and activities that make Michigan a great place to live, work, and play;
- Promote and foster efforts that support viable rural communities;
- Promote public awareness of Michigan agriculture, food, and fiber, and
- Coordinate and partner on food and agricultural interests with government agencies at the federal, state, and local levels; the private sector, academia, and the many diverse and interested organizations to achieve these goals.

## **MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **RURAL DEVELOPMENT FOCUS**

In June 2011, the Commission passed the following motion in support of Rural Development:

**The Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development supports the framework of the Department's Rural Development Strategy as a starting point for the ongoing discussion to improve leadership, economic vitality, and quality of life in rural areas by supporting regionally based activities, regulatory reform, and solution oriented strategies with a focus on business investment and job creation.**

**The Commission has hosted the following discussions around Rural Development topics over the last year:**

- **USDA Rural Development Overview:** Jim Turner, State Director, USDA Rural Development
- **Processes for Developing Rural Development:** Steve Webster, CEO, Prima Civitas Foundation
- **International Food Protection Training Institute / Integrated Food Safety System:** Gerald Wojtala, Exec. Director, International Food Protection Training Institute
- **Role of Economic Development Corporations in Rural Development:** Karl Dehn, President and CEO, Battle Creek Unlimited
- **Broadband Development in Michigan:** Eric Swanson, Department of Technology, Management, and Budget
- **Network Broadband Development:** Donald Welch, President and CEO of Merit Network
- **Rural Development Agriculture Transportation Projects:** Mike Kapp, Administrator, Office of Economic Development, Michigan Department of Transportation
- **Electric Cooperatives:** Craig Borr, President/CEO, Michigan Electric Cooperative Association
- **MSU Rural Development Priorities:** Thomas Coon, Director, MSU Extension
- **Food and Agriculture Mapping Project:** Scott Staelgraeve, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)
- **Regional Rural Development Projects:** Birgit Klohs, President and CEO, The Right Place
- **Rural Development Initiatives:** Daniel Gilmartin, Exec. Director and CEO, Michigan Municipal League
- **Rural Development Activities:** Larry Merrill, Executive Director, Michigan Township Association



- **Michigan's Farm to Institution Update:** Collen Matts, Farm to Institution Outreach Specialist, W.K. Kellogg Food and Fitness Initiative, C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems, MSU
- **Governor's Summit on Production Agriculture and Food Processors Summit:** Doug Buhler, Interim Dean, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, MSU, and Bob Boehm, Manager, Commodity and Marketing Department, Michigan Farm Bureau
- **Migrant Workers in Michigan** – Denise Donohue, Executive Director, Michigan Apple Committee, and John Bakker, Executive Director, Michigan Asparagus, Plum, and Onion Committees
- **Migrant Labor Update:** Belen Ledezma, Office of Workforce Development, and Mark Swartz, MDARD
- **Fair Food Network Project** – Patty Cantrell, Project Manager, Regional Food Solutions
- **Rural and Economic Development Activities:** Doug Smith, Senior Vice President, Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- **Talent/Workforce Update:** Diana Carpenter, Agriculture Market Talent Director, Workforce Development Agency, and Amy Epkey, MDARD
- **Rural Development Activities:** Steve Kluting, Partner and Co-Chair, Food Law Group, Varnum LLP
- **Regional Placemaking:** Mark Wyckoff, Professor and Director, Planning and Zoning Center, MSU